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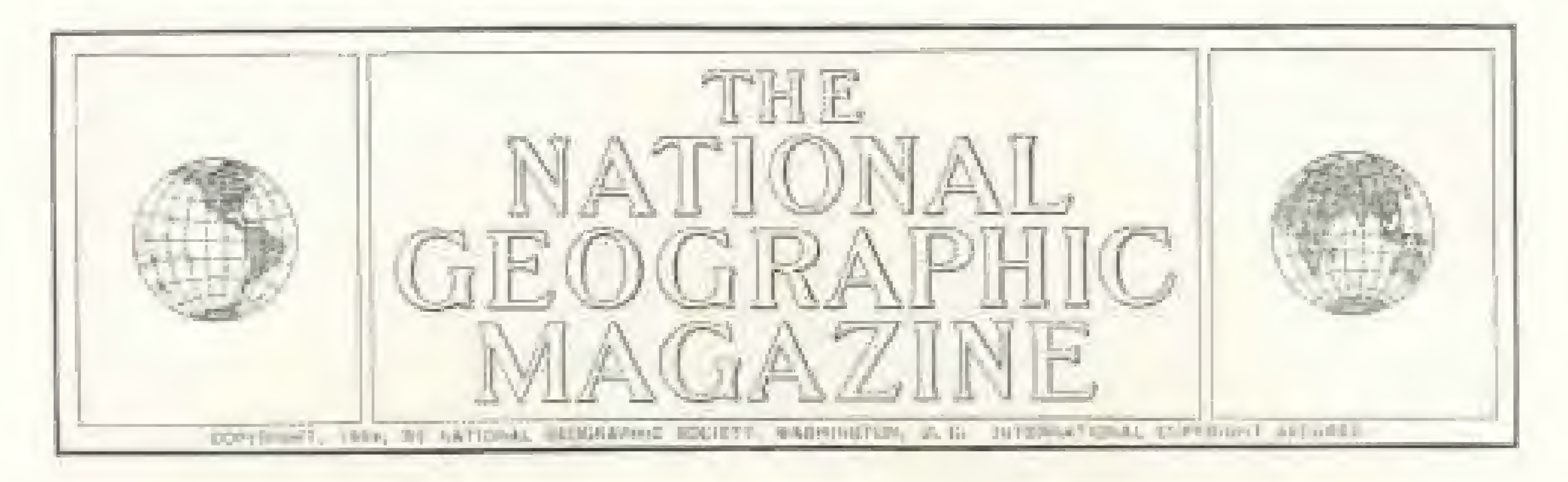
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THE SPELL OF ROMANIA

An American Woman's Narrative of Her Wanderings Among Colorful People and Long-Hidden Shrines

By Henrietta Allen Holmes

"CHAH! Chah! Chah!" All through my first night in Romania, as we sat in the car, hopelessly bogged down in a bottomless mudhole, these weird falsetto cries, oriental in their cadence, rang through our ears. They were uttered by peasants, who were urging their sleepy oxen on to begin work before dawn in their distant fields.

Some hours earlier, on our way to Sibiu, our night's objective, we had gotten off the main road and become completely lost. At midnight, not having eaten since noon, we entered an obscure village. Obviously, everyone had gone to bed except the numerous canine population, which loudly resented our intrusion.

Out of the darkness emerged the figure of a man. We explained our plight, and he tried to take us over a short cut to the main road. Halfway there, unskillfully guided, we suddenly dropped into a mudhole. With the aid of some passing peasants and their six oxen, we worked for many hours to extricate the car. Finally we gave up and tried to sleep in the cramped quarters of our roadster.

At dawn our friend, feeling responsible for the situation, arrived with more help. After five hours of fruitless effort, we learned of a near-by Saxon farmer who owned a tractor. When we found him it was only to hear the sad news that the machine was out of commission! He gave us, however, at his house a breakfast of freshly baked black bread and honey, which was manna from heaven to us.

After a sojourn of some twenty hours in the mud, with the help of four horses and a dozen men, we were finally on our way again.

A day later, entering Bucharest, I experienced a great disappointment. It was during the dry, hot month of July. On every side intense waves of heat from the flat Danubian plain engulfed us, and the green of the trees and grass was hidden beneath a thick coating of dust.

Driving down the Chaussée, we passed the now dilapidated plaster Arc de Triomphe, built for the coronation of King Ferdinand and Queen Marie.

Two years' residence in the country has changed this first, unfortunate impression. Great charm, I have learned, often lies under a dusty and shabby surface. In fact, I have fallen under the spell of Romania.

MANY INVASIONS HAVE LEFT THEIR IMPRINT

In Romania, East and West are so interwoven it is difficult to see where one leaves off and the other begins.

Perhaps the countless invasions which have swept her land may partly account for this strange blending of Orient and Occident. Each invader, whether he be Roman, Hun, Pole, or Turk, has left his strong imprint on the nature of the people.



THE KING ARRIVES WITH THE POMP OF YESTERDAY

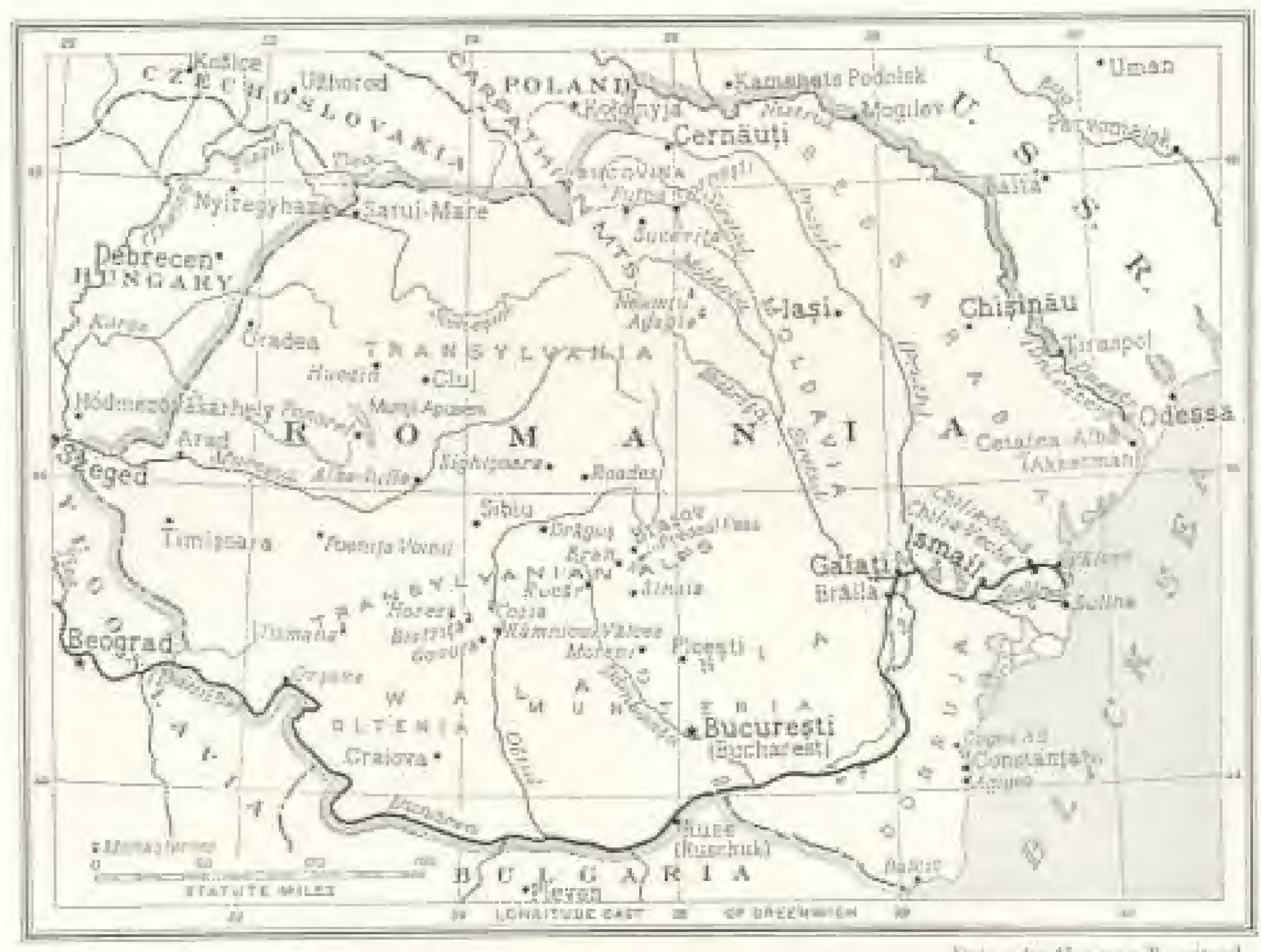
White-plumed guards stand like ramrods. Six coal-black stallions prance into view; the coachman energetically cracks his whip. Silks, satins, and brocades of postilions and footmen flash in the sun. The royal carriage rolls to a stop. Carol has come to open Parliament (see opposite page).



Photographs by J. Berman

SWING YOUR PARTNERS IN THE GAY "BATUTA"!

On a fête day in the Carpathians, peasants enjoy a popular dance considerably more rapid than the measured movements of the *hora* (see illustration, page 435). "She dances at the dance" is a peasant way of saying a young woman has reached marriageable age. In this case there is a decided dearth of girls.



Drawn by Newman Bumstead

FROM THE BLUE DANUBE TO THE GREEN HILLS OF BUCOVINA THE AUTHOR ROAMED

Her travels ranged among busy modern cities and lonely rural byways, gypsy camps, and caviar fisheries, mountain haunts of loggers and shepherds. She visited the regions of oil and wheat, and explored little-known fortified monasteries. Everywhere she met sturdy folk who cling to the gay costumes, dances, and customs of centuries past.

Though Paris may be France, Bucharest is hardly Romania. This capital has almost nothing in common with the country. It is a gay, cosmopolitan city, often, if not aptly, called the Little Paris of the Balkans.

Its streets are crowded with smartly dressed women, officers resplendent in their colorful uniforms and gold braid, and men and women of the foreign colonies, who contrast strikingly with peasants in native dresses and gypsies in rags and tatters. Its restaurants and coffeehouses, always famous for good food, are abuzz with the latest political rumors and gossip.

The opening, in the autumn, of Parliament by the King is a brilliant event. For several blocks and for hours, the Palace Guards in their bright blue uniforms, high patent leather jack boots, shining helmets with white horsehair plumes, stand smartly at attention until the members of Parliament, the Diplomatic Corps, the army generals, and the King have passed.

The great moments are the arrival and departure of the King, in an open landau. Footmen in satin breeches, long coats of brocade, and three-cornered hats, and a ferocious coachman cracking his whip at six milk-white or coal-black stallions, on whose backs ride postilions in bright red hunting costumes, add to the striking medieval picture (see opposite page).

We found it fun in winter to hire an open sleigh drawn by horses bedecked with bells and red ribbons, and driven by a coachman in a high fur căciulă (cachoula), a tall astrakhan cap, long velvet coat, and wide girdle of metal.

There are still a few coachmen living in Bucharest who belong to a curious alien sect called Scopiţi, now almost extinct. The men were allowed to marry, but at the birth of the first child they were made sterile. I saw them often driving open carriages. They are fat and their skin is like yellow parchment.



Photograph by Wilhelm Tobien

A GYPSY FLOWER GIRL SURVEYS PROSPECTS WITH CALCULATING EYE

The bare-footed sidewalk merchant of Bucharest then uses smiles and flattery to break down sales resistance. Although belonging to one of the gypsy families which have ceased wandering and settled down, she does not grow her flowers herself, but buys them each morning at the market.



© R. Raffius

THE WHITEWASHING PROFESSION IS A BIT OVERCROWDED

Gypsy women with their long-handled brushes block a sidewalk, as if to compel the pedestrian to "stand and deliver" at least a chicken-coop or a fence to keep them busy. Even in the cities whitewash is widely used instead of paint. In the background at the right is a Bucharest railway station.

The wide avenue leading up to the Arc de Triomphe, past a pretty little race course and the golf links of the Country Club is a miniature suggestion of the Champs Elysées in the French capital. Many stately palaces and homes line its streets. Romania has gone modern in her new houses and apartments.

There is much music other than in the cafés. Bucharest boasts of rather good opera during the winter and a really fine symphony frequently plays modern music. Last year we heard a fascinating gypsy dance, composed by a Romanian musician, rivaling Ravel's "Bolero" in rhythm. Enescu, the Romanian composer and violinist, is eagerly awaited in many cities of Europe and America, but so full of love for his homeland is this Romanian that he delights Bucharest a part of each year with his music.

The National Theater is well patronized and plays by Romanian and foreign authors are given. Once ornate, the building is now shabby, although an air of faded elegance still pervades the place.

The Parliament Buildings and the Romanian Orthodox Church stand on the summit of the only hill in Bucharest.

Bucharest is a city of churches. From everywhere can be seen rising the rounded domes of the Romanian Orthodox Church. The people are religious, but matter-of-fact about it. Despite the Slavic influence, there is no mysticism here. Religion is simply a part of everyday life. The Church is like a protective father, and they respond with a simple faith.

STORE SIGNS ARE ILLUSTRATED

Down by the banks of the Dâmbovița, which Eddie Cantor made famous in one of his songs, is the great market, where flowers, fruit, food, household goods, and Romanian handiwork are sold in the open booths of peasants and petty tradespeople (see illustration, page 407).

Because so many peasants are unable to read, signs on many stores and shops are illustrated with pictures of the articles for sale within.

Around Bucharest the country is not unlike the agricultural State of Kansas, my native State. Here is a tremendous wheat



Photograph courtesy Romanian Legation

THE BLESSING OF THE WATERS MEANS AN ICY BATH FOR SOME

Volunteers compete for the honor of retrieving the cross thrown by the white-bearded Patriarch into the Dâmbovița River in Bucharest on Epiphany, January 6. King Carol II, in long coat and spiked helmet, stands with church officials on the stone steps built especially for the ceremony.

and corn region. I love to go through the villages in this fertile district. Crazy little Rube Goldberg houses, whose white-washed walls are painted in soft pastel shades and decorated with borders of flowers or animals, present an amusingly shaky aspect along the streets. Romania is one of the few countries now left in Europe whose peasants usually dress in native costume (see Color Plates V, VI, IX, and XIII).

The Romanian peasant is lovable. Always gracious, courteous, and good-natured, he is industrious, yet somewhat inefficient. He works hard in his fields and forests, but always in a primitive manner, using the crude tools of his forefathers.

WASHING CLOTHES IS HARD BUT THOROUGH WORK

In Predeal, at the top of the Carpathian Pass, on the boundary line between the "Old Kingdom" and Transylvania, we spent a summer in a small cottage. During our holidays we had many opportunities to observe the ancient methods of work followed by the peasants.

I was particularly impressed with the native manner of washing clothes. Our laundress built a fire in the yard beneath a large iron pot, in which she put the clothes to boil. Then, in a large wooden trough hewn from a log, she rubbed and washed the garments with her hands, without even the aid of a washboard. Next, she wrung out the heavy linen with her own hands. Back-breaking work it was, but the clothes emerged spotlessly white.

With an old-fashioned iron, kept hot by a small charcoal fire inside, she pressed them, and I am sure she would have scorned the electric washing machines and irons so essential to American housewives.

Politically, Romania traveled toward the left after the war, as have in a degree most of the countries of the Near East. The large landholdings were expropriated and the acres sold to the peasants on easy terms, the result of which was to place the peasant in a more advanced position than he had



Photograph by J. Berman

A ROMANIAN BOY-POWER MERRY-GO-ROUND

The author saw it while traveling along the lower Danube near Ismail (see text, page 423). Husky youngsters on the platform overhead supply the motive power. Most of the children of the town, and even a grown-up or two, stand about awaiting their turn to ride.

ever known. It was not the intention to subject the landholding gentry to confiscation, although the results now present that appearance.

The land was appraised on a basis of reasonable value, and the gentry given Romanian bonds in compensation for the land. When subsequently the nation went off the gold standard and her money depreciated, these bonds became almost worthless. Since 1926, however, her currency has been among the most stable.

GYPSY CAMPS IN THE DANUBE DELTA

Our inclination led us to the south of Romania, so we went first to the Danube Delta country. There, during the spring and summer, many gypsy camps are found (see illustration, page 409).

In the Danube country gypsies carve out of wood huge water troughs, all variety and manner of cooking utensils, washing equipment, etc. With their wild animal eyes, scraggly black locks, wretchedly dirty, and clad in rags, gypsies are a proof of the disillusionment of reality.

Who has not conjured up some gay, romantic picture of gypsy life from afar? Yet how distressing when one meets it at close quarters! But gypsy music is beautiful. Almost at every street corner in Bucharest one encounters an urchin with his violin, ready to play for a few lei.

My first winter in Bucharest, in contrast to the summer, was bitterly cold. Often I was distressed to see gypsy boys, half naked and shivering, begging at the street corners. I was soon cured when one day, giving two boys some pieces of lei, they laughed, pulled out of their pockets handfuls, and began counting and dividing the money.

BEAR-TAMERS AND BLACKSMITHS

Since time immemorial gypsies have always gone into the bear-taming business. Very often you see several gypsies, with an equal number of bears, making them dance for a delighted crowd of onlookers. Or, failing a bear, gypsies are iron-forgers and blacksmiths, and their beautiful hand-wrought grilles are famous everywhere. Many times in passing a great house in



VÂLCOV, WEDDED TO THE WATERS, PRODUCES CAVIAR

Like Venice, this small fishing village on the Black Sea and the Danube Delta is interlaced with canals (see text, page 414). Here a bearded Russian fisherman poles his boat down a main thoroughfare.



Photographs by J. Berman

BUCHAREST HAS A BIT OF MANHATTAN SKYLINE

This building is Romania's tallest. It was erected by a Romanian subsidiary of the International Telephone and Telegraph Company, an American corporation, which operates all the telephones in the country.



© R. Rafiun

ROMANIAN PEASANT WOMEN WEAVE IMAGINATION INTO RUGS

Their handiwork forms a bright wall along the Dâmbovița River in the Bucharest open-air market, yet no two designs are exactly alike. Less elaborate pieces festoon the lamp-post. In the peasant home hand-woven carpets are considered too fine to be spread on the floor and are hung on the wall as tapestries or flung over bed, bench, or table. Oriental work introduced into Romania in the 16th century influenced the native art.



Photograph by Ewing Galloway

WITH A REED LIKE THESE FOR AN AIR-PIPE, THE ROMANIAN "ROBIN HOOD" ONCE ESCAPED BY HIDING UNDER WATER

In such marshes, not long ago, dwelt the romantic outlaw, Terente, who robbed the rich and gave to the poor (see text, page 423). Here peasants are harvesting thatch, still used on some houses. Two youngsters, minus clothes, have leaped into the water to help their elders cut, carry, and stack it.



Photograph by Dr. Franz Stoedtner

A WRESTLING BOUT ENLIVENS A GYPSY CAMP ON THE BLACK SEA NEAR AGIGEA

These nomads live by horse trading, begging, telling fortunes, and repairing pots and pans. Authorities make them move on after a day or two.

Photograph by Wilhelm Tobien

HARVEST TIME IS MERRYMAKING TIME IN ROMANIA

The gay harvesters pluck out tall weeds and stray stalks of hemp from last year's planting, as they reap the grain in this field near the eastern boundary of Bucovina.



Photograph by J. Berman

FARM WOMEN IN OLTENIA WATCH THEIR WHEAT TURN INTO FLOUR

Upstairs their husbands help the miller pour the grain under the millstone operated by a water wheel. The finished flour pours into the trough, in front of which the woman in the foreground is sitting, and is put into the elaborate hand-made sacks at the right to be taken home. The miller gets a percentage of the wheat as his fee.

Bucharest we saw fine examples of gypsy ironwork.

The delta country covers a tremendous area spreading between the three branches of the Danube.

Most important of Danube channels is the Sulina, which carries most of the river traffic coming down from far-off Germany, Austria, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia.

The European Commission of the Danube, which assures free navigation of the river, struggles constantly to keep the silt, washed down from half of Europe, from clogging up this artery to the Black Sea.

On the Danube's banks are two important ports, Galaţi and Brăila, which receive vessels of ocean draft. Principal exports are wheat, barley, corn, lumber, and some oil.

MANY RARE AND BEAUTIFUL BIRDS

The bird life of the delta is wondrous beyond description. Many rare and beautiful birds are here for the looking. We hired, at fifty cents for the day, a black, flat-bottom rowboat, and slipped silently through the reeds and narrow channels of the delta. Suddenly we surprised perhaps 200 pelicans, which, web-footed and gross, made their get-away quickly. We happened on a flock of wild swans sailing about in quiet dignity. Among the rarer varieties of duck is a snow-white bird with an emerald-green head and bill. Egrets, flamingos, cormorants, wild geese, many kinds of ducks, herons, and cranes are listed among the commoner varieties of bird life.

BOATMEN STILL WEAR FEZZES

As we were now near the Black Sea, why not go to Constanţa? This city, Romania's most important port, still bears traces of the Turkish occupation of Dobruja Province, which is reflected in its shabby mosque and the red fezzes of many of its boatmen (see illustration, page 424).

We found Constanţa a modern harbor, with a well-equipped oil dock where petroleum products are pumped directly into ocean-going tankers. A pipe line from the oil fields terminates here, but it is not adequate to meet the demand, and thousands



Photograph by J. Berman

FLOATING FLOUR MILLS WANDER UP AND DOWN THE DANUBE

The boats farthest out in the stream are anchored where the current will turn their big water wheels and grind the grain. They go from village to village, handling the farmers' wheat. Nearer shore a motor truck is being ferried up the river, and in the foreground fishermen are drying and mending their nets.



Photograph by Wilhelm Tobien

FOR YEARS THIS BURNING OIL WELL DEFIED EFFORTS TO EXTINGUISH IT

Romanian authorities kept a constant eye on the stubborn fire which belched black smoke from the center of a forest of derricks at Moreni, at the foot of the Transylvanian Alps. This is one of several petroleum regions which comprise a major natural resource of Romania (see text, page 414).



Photograph by Ewing Galloway.

IN NETTED BASKETS LIKE BIG BIRDCAGES, FAT DUCKS AND CHICKENS TAKE THEIR LAST RIDE

Fowls brought from the country in farm wagons are purchased by peddlers at the Bucharest poultry market, where farmers in folk costume rub elbows with city men in straw hats and store-bought suits. Shouldering his load and walking through the residential section, the peddler in the center foreground will invite housewives to pick out their poultry dinner alive.

of barrels are shipped overland by tank car.

Oil fields are tremendous, and vast tracts of proven land are yet undeveloped. Romania is one of the world's largest oil producers, being exceeded in 1932 only by the United States, the Soviet Union, and Venezuela. Petroleum products are important in her foreign trade because exportation is not seasonal.

The petroleum markets are principally Turkey, Egypt, Mediterranean ports, and even western Europe. Large quantities of grain are also shipped from the port, but unfortunately there are not enough grain elevators for efficient storage and lading.

Numerous resorts with good bathing beaches make this coast an attractive summering place. We enjoyed Eforia, a rather primitive resort just outside of Constanța, where we bathed in the Black Sea and gazed for hours at the ever-changing blues and greens of its waters.

To the south, at Balcic, Queen Marie has built a beautiful summer palace whose garden is the show place of the coast (see Color Plates II, III, and VIII). On the Black Sea, where the modern city of Constanța stands, are the ruins of old Tomi, where Ovid passed his life in exile and immortalized in verse the curative mud baths.

A BOAT TRIP DOWN THE DANUBE

One evening last autumn we boarded a Danube steamer at Galați whose staterooms would accommodate perhaps twelve people. We ate in the dining room, which was also the lounge. It was clean and comfortable and provided with a radio that shrieked oriental music into the late hours of the night.

Our only fellow travelers were a Romanian sea captain and his wife, also on their way to Vâlcov. Numerous, however, were our deck passengers—peasants with their live geese, goats, and household goods traveling to their homes along the Danube.

The boat cook was most obliging, allowing us to enter his kitchen, ask for certain dishes, and even explain to him the intricacies of baking an apple. Before we went to bed, he asked whether he should buy milk the next morning at one of the ports for our coffee.

As we were eating breakfast our friend the sea captain rushed to our table to point out at Chilia his ship. He was anxious to let us know that he was a salt-water sailor of a seagoing vessel which had even been to Bristol. It proved to be an ancient tramp steamer, but his pride in it was delightful. In the company of himself and his wife we visited the Vâlcov fisheries under the guidance of our captain, who wore a Mephistophelian beard.

VÂLCOV HAS CANALS FOR STREETS LIKE VENICE

We were enchanted to find Vâlcov more Russian than Russia. The men all wore full beards and were dressed in long velvet coats buttoned very smartly up the front, while the women, in their full skirts and heads covered with bright scarfs, made a gay picture. Children were everywhere chewing sunflower seeds, the Russian substitute for gum and peanuts.

Vâlcov was like a tiny Venice, with its canals serving as main thoroughfares through the town (see illustration, page 406). Both in the fishermen's houses and in the market places, we always found at least one lovely ikon.

Entering first an immense storage building, we saw where the fish were cleaned, sorted, packed in ice for shipment to Bucharest and other consuming centers, and smoked or salted for export. There was a great variety of salt- and fresh-water fish, including some strange Danubian species which we could not identify. At the back of the storage house was a deep cave topped by an earthen mound, where hundreds of tons of ice, cut from the river and canals in winter, are stored against the summer heat.

Crossing the main canal by an arched wooden bridge, which reminded us of the Rialto, we arrived at the large open market. Here the fishermen bring their daily catch to be sold under the supervision of the State Fisheries. They go out in groups of five or six to each sturdy boat made water-tight and blackened by tar. The boats set out in time to reach the fishing grounds by daylight; the fishermen say they must catch the wary sturgeon while she is still asleep.

THE QUEST FOR CAVIAR

The fishing ground varies with the seasons; sometimes it is the Black Sea and sometimes the Danube and the channels of the delta, where the sturgeon come to spawn. The boats return about noon, are



Natural Color Photograph by Wilhelm Tobien

SAINTS ASCEND THE GOLDEN STAIRS IN THE FRESCOES OF RUCĂR CHURCH

Four centuries have left clear and bright these rich Byzantine paintings. Favorite themes of the artists were the rewards of the righteous and the fate of the sinner. The boy, carrying a packet of bread blessed by the priest, wears the costume of his Walachian forbears.



A MINARET TOPS A SEASIDE CASTLE

The solid whitewashed structure, with its flower-grown walls, is Queen Marie's residence at Balcic in the Dobruja, where the Turks dominated for four and a half centuries.



Natural Color Photographs by Wilhelm Tobien

A MODERN VILLA REFLECTS THE PAST

In an attractive Bucharest home, graceful Byzantine columns blend pleasantly with Romanian architecture of today. Shrubs and flowers brighten the sidewalks of the capital.

III



A TURKISH MILL SLEEPS BY THE BLACK SEA

This relic survives the days of Crescent rule in the Dobruja. Beyond rise white chalk cliffs, framed by blue water and clear sky, which have won for this sunny region around Balcic the name "Silver Coast."



Natural Color Photographs by Wilhelm Tobien

SUCH A GARDEN MAY WELL TEMPT A QUEEN

A wrought-iron gate opens onto the flower-bordered terrace of Balcic Castle (see Plate VIII). Many flowers familiar to American garden-lovers are cultivated in Romania, where the climate resembles that of central New York State.



IN STEADY RHYTHM SWING THE SCYTHES

It takes teamwork to avoid cutting the other fellow's ankles as these peasants of Walachia Province move through the hayfield with their straight-handled implements. From their gay sashes hang whetstones and flasks of water.



Natural Color Photographs by Wilhelm Tobien

THE CAMERA CAUSES A STIR IN RUCĂR

At the prospect of a picture, women and girls trooped from their housework and embroidery to pose. A sprinkling of males shows what somber clothes the menfolk wear as they go about their woodcarving, farming, quarrying, and timbering on the slopes of the Transylvanian Alps.



PEASANT EMBROIDERY DISPLAYS A WEALTH OF INTRICATE DESIGNS

Patterns are often geometrical, but frequently represent flowers or fruit and more rarely animals or human figures. A farm woman worked all one winter to make the skirt and jacket which the salesgirl is exhibiting in the Bucharest marketplace.



 Natural Color Photographs by Wilhelm Tobien

MATERIAL FOR THESE DRESSES CAME FROM SILKWORMS IN THE WEARERS' OWN HOMES

The silken veil worn by the second girl from the left indicates that she is married. Unmarried girls wear bright bandanas, like those of her companions. A favorite pastime of young peasant girls is to gather at their friends' homes to chat and stitch the embroidery which adorns their finery.



© National Geographic Society

THE PEASANT WOMAN OF ROMANIA IS EVER SPINNING

As a first step in the weaving of a rug, she draws and twists the wool from her distaff and winds it as yarn upon a spindle. The designs, such as that of the rug on the steps, are made up "out of her head."



Natural Color Photographs by Wilhelm Tobien

SOME DAY THE GIRL MAY WEAR HER MOTHER'S DRESS

Such garments last a century or more. Especially durable is the woman's blouse of linen made from hemp instead of flax. Native vegetable dyes, which imparted soft, lasting colors, are being replaced today.



THIS DARK-EYED GIRL IS A GYPSY

She wears the Romanian national costume in particularly gorgeous colors and lives at Rucăr, for not all gypsies are nomads.



Natural Color Photographs by Wilhelm Tobien

A BABE IN SWADDLING CLOTHES

His mother clings to the belief that sheets and bands of cloth, wound snugly around the infant, will keep his tiny limbs straight.



QUEEN MARIE OFTEN ATTENDS CHURCH SERVICES HERE

Against a verdant hillside on the Dowager Queen's estate at Balcic (see Color Plates II and III) stands this modest stone chapel of the Greek Orthodox faith, Romania's official religion. Having been an English princess, Queen Marie is a member of the Church of England.



 Natural Color Photographs by Wilhelm Tobien

AN ARMED COMRADE GUARDS ROMANIA'S UNKNOWN SOLDIER

Day and night an army sentinel paces to and fro beside the revered tomb in Carol Park. The Kingdom's colors—red, yellow, and blue—mark the resting place, where a flame is kept always burning. In Bucharest's war museum beyond is a notable collection of old firearms and flags.

unloaded, the fish weighed, and the caviar extracted.

A good catch in season may reach 40,000 pounds, of which usually 12,000 pounds are sturgeon. Twelve thousand pounds of sturgeon will ordinarily produce 500 pounds of caviar. The average sturgeon weighs about 450 pounds, and a record specimen just under 2,000 pounds. In the best season about 5 per cent of the sturgeon's gross weight is caviar. At New York prices for the little black eggs, a 2,000-pound fish represents a respectable sum.

The sturgeon are put up for auction and the buyers must be very expert to judge the amount of caviar in the fish before it is opened.

These were the most famous and richest of Russia's caviar fisheries before Bessarabia became a component part of Romania in 1918.

Our visit to Vâlcov was rather disappointing, as the preceding day had been a holiday, and as great quantities of ţuica (tzooicka), the national drink, made from fresh plums, had been consumed, many of the fishermen had not felt equal to going out and the catch was small.

We visited the Lipovan Orthodox Church. Because of their refusal to subscribe to the ritualistic reforms of the Russian Church at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Lipovans were sent by the Russian Government to colonize the delta. They still maintain that they are the only true believers in the old creed and stoutly adhere to their traditional beliefs and practices. The Romanian Government has not disturbed them since the inclusion of Bessarabia in Romania and their life goes on unruffled by political changes.

FEASTING IN THE CHURCHYARD

In the churchyard we found several townspeople cleaning up the remains of the St. Mary's Day feast given the day before to the poor of the town. Much food must have been cooked, judging from the size of the black-iron cauldrons.

Attracted by the sound of music and stamping of feet, we wandered into a small café, on our way back to the boat, where the men of the town were still making merry. They were singing lustily, and now and then one of them jumped up from his table and danced a wild, fast Russian folk-dance to the tune of a wheezy accordion industriously operated by a blind musician. Over the bar hung an ikon of the Madonna, who seemed to smile down in approval on the gaiety of her people. With typical Russian cordiality our presence was welcomed and we were asked to join in the festivities.

WHERE THE DANUBE IS BLUE

Our afternoon and night trip back to Galaţi was a beautiful one. The Danube was as blue as one expects but rarely finds it. The land spread for miles on either side in low, flat stretches, but here and there one saw a cluster of small houses, a few lean cattle, and tiny plots of ground for cabbage and corn, which some enterprising peasant had reclaimed from the swamps.

In these hundreds of square miles of river and marshes live only the hard-working fishermen and many fugitives from justice. These latter hide themselves in the labyrinth of channels and almost impenetrable swamps.

Romania's most famous outlaw lived for many years in the delta and successfully defied the efforts of the police to find him (see illustration, page 408). He was the picturesque Terente, the "Robin Hood of the Delta." He robbed the rich and gave to the poor and never took a leu from anyone without giving a signed receipt for what he had stolen. He wrote amusing letters to the police and gendarmerie, saying that he had talked with the commandant the night before or thanking an officer for the drink they had had together.

Once the gendarmes combed the swamps and surrounded him, but he escaped by lying under the water and breathing through a hollow reed until the almost solid line of police had passed him by. But he was finally caught and shot down when the police lay in wait for him outside his sweetheart's hut on the edge of a fishing village—"cherchez la femme!"

Once on our return we saw a home-made merry-go-round operated by a group of boys who stood on a platform above and pushed it at top speed (see illustration, page 405).

Late in the afternoon we arrived at a very Russian town with the Turkish name of Ismail, at the mouth of the Danube. The population was perhaps 30,000, and from the boat we could see the green domes of at least a dozen churches rising above the town, bearing the Russian cross with its two



Photograph courtesy Romanian Legation

CONSTANŢA IS THE FUNNEL FOR ROMANIAN OIL AND GRAIN

The ancient city, founded by Constantine the Great in honor of his half-sister, Constantia, is the Nation's chief outlet to the Black Sea and is connected with the oil region by pipe lines (see text, page 410). The mosque at the right was built by King Carol I of Romania as a gift to the Turkish population.

bars. Along the quay were many of the low, open Russian carriages called "droshkies," which added to the Russian flavor.

All in all, the trip was charming and leisurely except for the fact that when we reached Galaţi the next morning we had only 40 minutes to make our train. The station was about two miles from the dock—not a taxi, not a vehicle in sight. Carrying our baggage, we began running toward the station. One of our party eventually discovered a cart and, mounting beside the driver and watching over the baggage, she jolted along over the rough cobblestones to the station. Arriving there, she was even more exhausted from the bouncing than we who had run the whole way, only to discover the train had been gone for three minutes.

When we penetrated into the Carpathians we found the timber business a flourishing industry. The logs are fastened together in fan-shaped rafts and guided by men to the sea in the spring, when the torrents are swift and dangerous.

All peasant life is interesting, and the wayside scenes are full of varying incident. Often in the spring, when the nights were still cold and clear, we came upon large flocks of sheep, their bells tinkling and their eyes shining like points of flame. Romanian peasants, wearing large furry capes, like pictures from the Old Testament, herded the flocks on foot to pastures in the mountains away from the summer heat. Many came from the far Danube country.

As we entered some cities of Transylvania the change was emphatic, because this province, formerly Hungarian, decided to become part of Romania following the war. Beside the embroidered dress of the Romanians, one sees Hungarian and Saxon costumes worn by tall men and women of the Magyar and Teutonic races. The women are pretty in their full skirts, tight bodices, and straw hats trimmed with flowers and ribbons, and the men wear broad-brimmed felt hats, black short coats, black boots, and tight breeches.

Often the architecture is distinctly different—the houses are gabled and Germanic. Everywhere the signs are in three languages—Romanian, German, and Hungarian. Transylvania has a mixed population



HOMEWARD PLOD THE HARVESTERS

Before sunrise this trio began swinging their long scythe blades through the fragrant hay (see Color Plate IV). Now the work is over, they don their coats and shoulder their implements, the blades carefully wrapped with cloth to prevent rust. In the bundles are corn and peas for the family.



Photograph by J. Berman

ALL HANDS GIVE A DAY'S WORK TO THE CHURCH

Custom decrees that the young men and women of this village each year harvest the priest's wheat. Shouldering scythes and rakes, they sing lustily as they follow him to his fields. Even the pigs seem to have caught the spirit of the occasion. When the crop is cut and stacked, a cross made of the wheat is borne back to the village, where the dominie provides a feast.



Photograph by Wilhelm Tobien

FROM MAKER TO WEARER JUST AROUND THE CORNER

High leather boots, sold to those desiring protection from snow and mud, are taken from the artisan's small shop to the market place, in the university town of Cluj, Transylvania. An apprentice, still wearing the leather apron of his craft, shoulders the light end of the pole from which hang the boots in graded sizes.



Photograph by J. Berman

A BUCOVINA MOUNTAINEER PLAYS HIS BAGPIPE FOR POSTERITY

Roman warriors may have introduced the instrument into Romania, as they did into the British Isles. Like the bagpipe of the Romans and the Scottish Highlanders, this one is inflated by the breath, not by a bellows. Because the difficult art of making and playing these skin instruments is vanishing among its people, the music is now being recorded by phonograph.

of Romanians, who are in the majority, Hungarians, and Saxons. These latter were brought in by the Hungarian kings to form a defense against invasion. The German settlements centered around the seven Saxon burgs—the German name for Transylvania is "Siebenbürgen."

Of the original seven Saxon burgs, the largest and the most interesting are Brașov (Kronstadt), Sibiu (Hermannstadt), and Sighișoara (Schässburg). The first is the largest. The second has fine buildings, museums, and libraries which draw many people.

Brașov has a medieval church, now Lutheran, filled with rare Turkish carpets, gifts of merchants at christenings, marriages, or funerals. This city was formerly the trading point of central Europe with Turkey and the East.



Photograph by J. Baylor

IF YOUR BACK ACHES, BRUIN WILL DANCE ON IT

Gypsies teach their dancing bears to massage the muscles of poor people, weary from working all day in the fields. The patients lie flat on the ground and seem to enjoy Dr. Bear's somewhat heavy-footed treatment. While a policeman (upper right) keeps an eye on the group, one of the itinerants beats time with his hand-made drum and his partner handles the well-muzzled performer, to the delight of a crowd of youngsters in high-school uniform.

THE CARCASSONNE OF ROMANIA

To me Sighișoara is the real jewel of them all. It is a medieval fortress city built on a hill, more untouched than Carcassonne. Because her people were too poor to tear down the old city and build new homes, a great treasure has been preserved in her fine church and guildhalls, in the towers of her walls (see Color Plate XII). We were shown through the museum by the curator and his sister, who were profound students. He, as the leading physician of the town, had been fortunate in being able to find precious articles in the homes of his patients. Here the Saxons use the German tongue when speaking of their rivers and their city, Schässburg, and some do not know the Romanian names which have been officially substituted.

It was near Sighișoara that our own soldier of fortune, John Smith, in one of the paid armies of Europe, fought bravely and distinguished himself in the Battle of Three Turks' Heads. For John Smith's bravery the Duke of Transylvania, Sigismundus Bathor, knighted him in 1603, and the records in the British Museum contain the following citation, a translation of the patent:

"Sigismundus Bathor, by the grace of God, Duke of Transylvania, Wallachia and



Photograph by Wilhelm Tobien

LUCKLESS SUITORS HELP CELEBRATE THE WEDDING

Nearly the whole village of Rucăr gathers at the bride's house, where music adds to the gaiety. Usually the musicians are gypsies, natural masters of the melodies of their race. Music is provided by a violin and a portable cymbal.



Photograph by J. Berman

ROMANIAN COUPLES ARE TIED WITH A DOUBLE KNOT

Law prescribes a civil ceremony before the church wedding can be performed. Here an Oltenian peasant bridegroom in a straw hat leads his bride before the mayor, the smiling young man standing at the far end of the table and wearing the official scarf. Two peasant friends sign as witnesses. The next stop is the church, where the priest will marry the happy pair again.



Photograph by J. Berman

BABIES SHOULD BE SEEN AND NOT HEARD AT THE SPINNING BEE

Mothers bring them along in the evening and keep them quiet by gently swinging the suspended cradles with practiced feet. Proudly displayed in this peasant guest room is a picture of relatives who emigrated to the United States and prospered.



Photograph by Denis Galloway

A WOMAN PROSAICALLY SELLS SAUSAGE AT THE "MARRIAGE MARKET"

On a peak in the Munţii Apuseni (the Sunset or Western Mountains), in west-central Transylvania, young women and men from sequestered valleys still assemble at the annual fair with a view to matrimony. Each girl coyly displays her trousseau as evidence of her skill in household arts, and a courtship thus begun may ripen later at her parents' home. The custom is dying out.



STRONG SHOULDERS SERVE AS A HEARSE IN RURAL ROMANIA

Young men carry the flower-decked coffin in this Transylvanian village funeral procession. Before them the venerable bearded priest of the Greek Orthodox Church walks slowly with the aid of a cane. The faces of children reflect the solemnity of their elders.



Photographs by J. Berman

A BARNYARD FUNERAL IS HELD AROUND AN OPEN COFFIN

Mourners were so numerous that the small farm home would not hold them, necessitating this open-air ceremony in Moldavia Province. A robed priest conducts the service and a layman reads the responses. Afterward a hand-woven shroud will be wrapped around the body, the lid nailed down, and the coffin carried to the graveyard.



Photograph by Wilhelm Tobien

"MARRIED TO-DAY AND OUT AT THE ELBOWS TO-MORROW"

So goes a Romanian peasant proverb, since a young couple's financial margin is small and children soon arrive. This young bridegroom of Rucăr poses, with all the dignity his small stature can command, between his bride and his future father-in-law. The men wear flowers made of wax.

Moldavania, Earle of Anchard, Salford and Growenda; to whom this writing may come or appear: Know that we have given leave and licence to *John Smith*, an English Gentleman, Captaine of 250 soldiers; whose service doth deserve all praise and perpetuall memory toward us, as a man who did for God and his country overcome his enemies: Wherefore, out of our love and favor, according to the law of Armes, We have ordained and give him on his shield of Armes, the figure and description of three Turkes heads, which with his sword before the town of *Regall*, in single combat, he did overcome, kill and cut off, in the Province of Transylvania.

"Sealed at Lipswick in Misenland, the ninth day of December, in the yeare of our Lord, 1603.

"(Signed) SIGISMUNDUS BATHOR."

Before leaving Transylvania we saw the holy city of Alba-Iulia resting secure within its ancient walls on a hilltop. In the Orthodox coronation cathedral the late Ferdinand, on October 15, 1922, was crowned first King of United Romania. Alba-Iulia is the cradle of Romanian liberty, one writer has said. About 1600 Michael the Brave took and held Alba-Iulia and Transylvania, which constituted one of Romania's claims to Transylvania when they were united in 1918.

RESORTS DATE FROM ROMAN TIMES

Many watering resorts are scattered over Romania. They were mostly discovered and built by the Romans. One wit has said that so many are the baths found in the countries of early Roman occupation that it would seem the Romans conquered only for the joy of bathing.

In a motor trip of two weeks in northern Romania, I remember meeting no other sight-seers. As for the railroads, the main lines connecting with western Europe afford de luxe trains, such as the excellent Arlberg and the famous Orient Express, which pass through Bucharest; but I found taking local trains while traveling through the country was as slow as going day coach in rural areas at home. We were, however, very comfortable traveling second class to the Black Sea on a luxurious express.

It would be a pity to travel through Romania by train. Going by automobile, it



Photograph by Denis Galloway: Cluj Ethnographic Museum

DEVOUT PEASANTS KNEEL BY A HAYSTACK TO PRAY FOR ABUNDANT CROPS

Under the fluttering banners of the Greek Orthodox Church, a priest blesses water which he will sprinkle on the fields near Poenița Voinii to make the land fertile. The typical Romanian farmer always asks a formal blessing for his important undertakings. In time of drought prayers for rain are offered (see text, page 447).



Photograph by J. Berman

PEASANTS SAY THEY "DANCE ON SUNDAY TO KEEP THE CREAK OUT OF THEIR BONES ON MONDAY"

Whole villages assemble after church, the young people to tread the rhythmic measures of the *hora*, and their elders to look on. This ancient national dance of Roman origin, which sometimes continues for hours, seems a cross between a slow jig and a game of ring-around-the-rosy. Joining hands, the participants go through a stepping, swaying motion to the music of a fiddle and guitar.



Photograph by J. Berman

EVERYWHERE THE MARE WENT THE COLT WAS SURE TO GO

It followed her to market one day—through the southern Carpathian foothills, in the Old Kingdom of Romania. The woman astride her small mountain pony has brought the inevitable mass of wool and she spins worsted as she rides. The saddlebags bulge with butter, cheese, and fruit to be sold in town.



Photograph by J. Berman

BARGAINS, NOT BLUE RIBBONS, ARE SOUGHT AT THIS CATTLE FAIR

On the outskirts of Dăguş, in Transylvania, farmers shrewdly trade, buy, or sell, and then spend the proceeds in town, where leather goods and coveted articles for the home are bought. The late Queen Elizabeth of Romania, widely known by her *nom de plume* of "Carmen Sylva," referred to the rural folk of her adopted land as "its white-clad peasantry, frugal, grave."



Photograph by J. Berman

FOR THREE CENTURIES THIS GONG HAS SUMMONED MONKS TO PRAYER

The broken piece of metal bears the arms of one of the old Roumanian principalities. It hangs in the Tismana Monastery, having somehow escaped the fate of the many bells which were melted down to make ammunition for artillery during the World War invasion of the country (see text, page 447).

is necessary to be prepared to suffer many hardships, not only in the manner of going, but also the hotels are often primitive and uncomfortable.

You can, however, have wholesome, simple food if you stick to native dishes. One called *sarmale* is a concoction of sour cabbage leaves, rather like sauerkraut but more delicately flavored, rolled around a meatball, served with coarse cornmeal mush, called *mămăligă* (mamaliga), and a highly spiced sauce, and oftentimes thick sour cream. Mămăligă is a national food and one of the principal means of sustenance of the poor. It is also served with eggs and in other combinations.

Going by train, one would miss the beautiful countryside, the interesting peasant life, and the constantly changing scenery and atmosphere. Because of bad roads and inadequate railroad communications, within a comparatively few miles there is a marked difference apparent in dress and customs.

THE HOME OF A MYSTERY TRIBE

Motoring out from Brașov, through Transylvania, we were amazed at the change in the people, houses, and dress. This was the land of the Szeklers, that curious Turanian tribe about whose origin there has been so much controversy. Some historians maintain that they were left behind when Attila's horde of Huns withdrew to the east. Others contend that they were a distinct tribe of Árpád's invading Magyars who settled in the mountains of eastern Transylvania.

The houses of these people are built of logs and the carved wooden gates in front of them are distinctly central Asiatic in form. We found it difficult to ask our way through this district, as almost no one spoke Romanian.

On our trip through Moldavia and Bucovina, the roadside scenes were a compensation for the long, hard miles we traveled. One afternoon, while descending the eastern slopes of the Carpathians, following the northern Bistrița River, we came upon a tiny village of three or four houses, where a wedding was being celebrated.

From miles around the mountain people had walked to take part in the festivities. They were so clean, happy, care-free, and



Photograph by Denis Galloway, Cluj Ethnographic Museum

TO THE HILLS! THE BARBARIANS ARE COMING!

In the ancient days of frequent invasions, these long wooden trumpets, or *tulnice*, spread the alarm. The melancholy notes, of tremendous carrying power, relayed from mountain to mountain, meant that hostile hordes soon would sweep through the Transylvanian valleys with torch and sword. Now a peasant girl, watching her grazing cows, blows a stentorian blast.



WARLIKE WAVES HAVE SWIRLED AROUND THESE WALLS

Christian princes fleeing from Asiatic enemies centuries ago offered prayers of thanksgiving when they reached the fortified Sucevița Monastery, in the part of northern Moldavia which is now Bucovina (see text, page 450). In this border region the Romanians have fought many invaders, and during the World War the Russian and Austrian armies made it a battlefield.

well fed that the nightmare of world depression seemed a million miles away. They were handsome in their holiday clothes, which were the most beautiful I have seen in Romania.

In addition to the felt breeches and white starched blouses, the men wore white leather boleros embroidered in colored beads, rather like American Indian work, or in coarse multicolored yarn and trimmed with bands of caracul and astrakhan.

The women were equally charming. Many carried infants of three and four weeks old, bound like little mummies in linen bands, but muffled up to the chin in pink quilts and wearing conventional pink baby-hoods adorned with many bows. They were carried in little wooden troughs, which had been hollowed out from a tree trunk and gaily painted.

POSING FOR A PHOTOGRAPH

Another day we came upon crowds of peasants hurrying to a small wooden church where the feast day of St. Stephen was to be celebrated. We stopped four young lads dressed in pure white except for bright red sashes and small black felt hats in which a feather or paper flower was jauntily stuck.

To our request for a photograph they lined up in a dignified manner, assumed grave expressions, advanced one foot slightly forward, and with one arm akimbo made a smart appearance. Then with true Romanian courtesy and hospitality they invited us to come to the celebration.

Arriving there, we found hundreds of peasants gathered in the churchyard, forming a procession, a few carrying bright satin banners, while two strong men tolled the bell which was hung in a simple wooden tower apart from the church. Their objective was the little country graveyard, a few hundred yards away. There they knelt and prayed, the women in separate groups.

It was all rather touching, because this was obviously a poor district and, there being no priest, some of the farmers performed the ceremony. We were probably the only Americans ever seen by these people. They were ever so curious, but friendly and helpful.

A large group of young boys surrounded us, inspected every square inch of the car, begged for rides, and one proudly appointed himself guide and camera-carrier and helped keep off the crowd while we snapped pictures. On our way back to the road we found a few late stragglers: some peasant women, no doubt detained by household cares, carrying their shoes in one hand, greeted us. When asked to pose for a picture, they first hurriedly put on their shoes.

BEAUTIFUL EMBROIDERY OF ANCIENT DESIGN

All the world knows of the art and handicraft of Romania's peasants (see Color Plate V). In the stores and import shops of the large cities of the world may be bought blouses exquisitely embroidered, striking bits of pottery, and carpets of an exceedingly artistic and original design. The Romanian peasant has wrought by hand, as he has done for centuries, these works of true merit, the science of which his ancestors have bequeathed to him. He has continued to make them in the same primitive manner with the same implements his forefathers used before him.

During the long Romanian winter, when deep snow covers the ground and seals his tiny hut, the peasant makes into thread the flax or hemp of his fields. On his home looms he weaves cloth and embellishes it with intricate embroidery whose ancient designs are a part of his polyglot background. His pottery is as primitive and brilliant as that of our American Indians, and in the dim past may have come from the same Asiatic source. The wool from the backs of his sheep is carded by hand, spun into yarn by the distaff, and woven on homemade looms into carpets (see Color Plate VI and page 407).

MONASTERIES ARE TREASURIES OF ART

But what does the world know of the greatest and richest of all Romania's art treasures—her medieval, fortified monasteries? Why does not the world come here to enjoy the beauties of these Byzantine monuments as it goes to see the inheritances of Italy and Spain, or the mosques of Istanbul? Why have so few travelers visited and written accounts of her monasteries, about which clusters a wealth of material, historical and legendary? Even if one lives in Romania, one is barely conscious of the existence of these monasteries.

Because of the lack of local interest, I was not prepared for their rare charm. Despite the hardships of travel over bad roads, we found it well worth our discomfort and



CASTLE PELEŞ, AT SINAIA, IS A FAVORITE RESIDENCE OF THE KING

The palace nestles among the pines of the Transylvanian Alps, two hours by train from Bucharest. It was built fifty years ago by Carol I, the Hohenzollern founder of the Rumanian dynasty. His grandnephew, King Carol II, the reigning monarch, was born here. Beyond rise the mile-high summits of the Bucegi Range.



 Natural Color Photographs by Wilhelm Tobien

COSTUMES BLEND STYLES OF NEARLY TWO THOUSAND YEARS

A modern hat and top-boots are combined by the man at the left with the long, loose shirt, trousers, and leather belt which were fashionable when the Roman legions of Trajan invaded the land. These peasants make their home in the northern Province of Bucovina, meaning "Forest of Beech."



TIME OUT FOR A DRINK OF SPRING WATER

Bran Castle gardeners in Transylvanian peasant dress quench their thirst at a fountain dedicated to the donor's patron saint. Shelter and water are provided at many such stations in Romania.



Natural Color Photographs by Wilhelm Tobien

SHE IS PROUD TO BE GARDENER TO A QUEEN

Nasturtiums and campanulas are the flowers grown so luxuriantly by this girl in Queen Marie's gardens at Bran. Dark skirts and bright aprons with vertical patterns are favored in this region.



Natural Color Photograph by Wilhelm Tobien

TEUTONIC KNIGHTS BUILT BRAN CASTLE SEVEN CENTURIES AGO

When Transylvania was united with Romania after the World War, the city of Brașov presented this historic fortress to Queen Marie, who has furnished it in old Romanian style and often makes her home there in the summer. Beside a little tea house, once a favorite haunt of Princess Ileana, peasants till and water the flowers of the palace garden.



"THE TOWER OF THE HOUR" IS SIGHIŞOARA'S BIG BEN

The towers and walls of the medieval city are as well preserved and distinctive as those of Carcassonne in France. Near this Transylvanian town our colonial soldier of fortune, Captain John Smith, distinguished himself at the Battle of Three Turks' Heads.



Natural Color Photographs by Wilhelm Tobien

CHURCH AND FORT ARE MERGED IN ONE

In the Sibiu district of Transylvania there are several villages with a definite Teutonic aspect. The houses are gabled, Romanian and Saxon costumes are worn, and three languages—German, Hungarian, and Romanian—are spoken.



READY FOR A PEASANT'S SATURDAY NIGHT

Don Juans of rural Transylvania, having finished their farm work for the day, don holiday attire. The one at the right wears an unusually fine black coat slung loosely across his shoulders, as is often the custom. Cockades of flowers add a touch of jauntiness



Natural Color Photographs by Wilhelm Tobien

EVEN THE BLACK SHEEP HAS ITS DAY

The girl at the upper right is transferring from distaff to spindle natural black wool for somber garments, such as the apron of her friend in the foreground. A Roman design, probably a heritage from early colonists, adorns the white underskirt of the spinner at the left.



Natural Color Photograph by Wilhelm Tobien

THE COVERED WAGON BRINGS PICNICKERS, NOT PIONEERS, IN THE TRANSYLVANIAN ALPS

Against a back-drop of mountain scenery, Romanian peasants on the way to market stop for a few moments to rest and gossip. Here in the Rucăr region of Walachia the woman's skirt is a long piece of richly embroidered material wrapped twice around and fastened with a belt.



"TWO'S COMPANY, THREE'S A CROWD"

The couple chatting over the wooden bucket wear the white sheepskin waistcoats popular with both men and women of Putna. Romanian fashion in Bucovina decrees a hobble skirt effect, attained by folding.



Natural Color Photographs by Wilhelm Tobien

GENTLEMEN PREFER BRUNETTES—IN ROMANIA

For her portrait, this young girl of Putna donned a waistcoat trimmed with fur and embroidered with wool and silk, her best bandana and matching girdle, and even a treasured necklace and earrings.



A FRESCOED CHURCH COMMEMORATES A MILITARY VICTORY

Stephen the Great, warrior prince of Moldavia, built a place of worship as an expression of thanksgiving after each of his forty-odd wars. Here is one of them in Bucovina, its paintings still distinct after 446 years.



Natural Color Photographs by Wilhelm Tobien

SAXON PEASANTS READY FOR CHURCH

Tall, dignified headgear is worn by the women as well as the men in Roades, Transylvania. Male attire includes a white outer coat, embroidered with floral designs. Such costumes customarily are donned only on Sundays or feast days.

fatigue when we came upon one of these monasteries toward the end of a long day.

The monasteries are to be found in the old principalities of Walachia and Moldavia and in lovely Bucovina, lying in green and peaceful beauty on the eastern slopes of the Carpathians. The majority were built by local princes to commemorate a victory over an invader, or to serve as a refuge for their families and retainers in time of peril. Most of them are medieval fortresses and as such their location is of particular interest.

Built in isolated spots at the head of charming river valleys and hidden in wooded mountains, they were made impregnable as much by obscurity as by high walls, bastions, and occasional moats. Although they passed through the hands of many invaders, it is extraordinary how intact they have kept their early Byzantine character and Greek Orthodox tradition.

Romania is the only Latin, or Romance, country of the Eastern faith. The language, caught from the first Roman invaders, is basically Latin, but has absorbed much of the Slavic tongue. The ceremonial church language used from earliest days was Slavonic, and it occupies that place in the written record and ritual of the church which Latin does in the Catholic churches of the Western world.

A CHURCH BELL THAT SOUNDED LIKE A TOM-TOM

Slavonic was built on the alphabet invented by Cyril, a missionary monk of the Eastern church, to fit the Slavic tongue. Cyril and his brother, Methodius, set out from Constantinople (Istanbul) in the ninth century to convert the pagan Slavic tribes to Christianity. The Romanians had been Christians since Roman times.

We were fortunate in visiting Cozia, region of Oltenia, in the late afternoon. As we were leaving, our footsteps were arrested suddenly by a strange oriental rhythm. A young monk, beating on a heavy curved bar of timber, was calling his brothers to vespers. The bizarre tone and the echoes reverberating amidst the hills above the monastery recalled for a moment African tom-toms. We discovered that the wooden arc had been substituted for ancient bells which were melted down and made into cannon balls during the war.

A few miles farther on, in a secluded valley, we came upon the charming old monastery of Dintr'un Lemn, now a nunnery. On a hill, in a grove of hoary oaks, there stands a small wooden church, said to be made from the wood of a single tree.

On a balcony bright with pink geraniums, overlooking the church, the charming Mother Superior offered us refreshments of delicious preserved pears and a glass of water—the oriental fashion of serving sweets. Afterwards we were shown through the apartments filled with fine French Period furniture reserved for the Queen, who has honored this monastery with visits from time to time.

Some 25 miles from the Bistrița Monastery we came upon a procession of priests carrying the treasured casket containing the bones of St. Gregory through the streets of Râmnicul-Vâlcea. A crowd of peasants and townspeople followed in dusty pilgrimage, joining in the chanting and prayers of the priests for rain in this valley, which had suffered a drought for several months. Perhaps we witnessed a miracle, for while we were visiting Bistrița later it suddenly commenced to rain.

From Bistrița an easy half hour's drive brought us to Horez, the finest of all the seventeenth-century foundations of Constantine Brancovan. The monastery takes its name from the horned owls of its encircling forest. We entered the fortified gate, chilled by the forbidding aspect of its grim walls, to step into a more friendly world of beauty and repose.

Nuns now replace the monks, and we enjoyed our visit to the large workrooms, where they weave carpets and cloth from the wool of their flocks and the flax of their fields. Upon Horez, Constantine Brancovan lavished incalculable wealth in the expectation that it would serve as a final resting place for the members of his princely house.

EXTERIOR FRESCOES DEFY WEATHER'S RAVAGES

In the northern part of Moldavia, called the "Bucovina" from its vast beech forests, one finds many of the most beautiful of the fortress monasteries. The exterior walls of brick and stone are ofttimes decorated with enamel terra-cotta plaques and by exterior frescoes, whose state of preservation is amazing in this land of extremes of temperature.

To Stephen the Great of Moldavia, that religious and powerful prince who ruled from 1457 to 1504, is largely due the credit of having built these enduring monuments, as



Photograph by Denis Galloway, Cluj Ethnographic Museum

VANITY PRESCRIBES THESE PANCAKE HATS

Even peasant women who work in the fields covet a smooth white complexion, so straw sunbonnets are popular near Cluj, in Transylvania. The girls are pulling hemp, the fiber of which is used more extensively than flax for making linen cloth in some parts of Romania.

Constantine Brancovan did two centuries later in Walachia. One counts easily forty or fifty churches raised by Stephen within a radius of as many miles.

The church frescoes and ikons were painted according to the strict rules and regulations of the Eastern Church.*

Although the perspective is primitive and the figures ramrodlike and unyielding, the wealth of small decorative detail and the color enhance the charm of these paintings, which have so well withstood the elements during centuries. Their preservation symbolizes in a way the strong church faith which resisted the years of battle fought on this ground.

* See "The Hoary Monasteries of Mount Athos," by H. G. Dwight, in the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE, September, 1916.

Neamțu, a monastery dating from 1390, is mainly interesting for its treasures and because it became a center of church Slavonic lore. It was restored in the late fifteenth century by Stephen the Great. The church is constructed of brick, with here and there a fragment of brightly colored enameled tile, reminding one that once it presented a façade of bizarre, strong, primary colors, elementary in design but satisfying a taste at once oriental and primitive. Old frescoes and fine ikons enriched the nave and pronaos.

Extraordinary are the treasures in the museum, with its jeweled diadems, heavy silver candelabra, lamps, and religious relics.

There are also Bibles with beautifully illuminated parchment pages, protected by

hand-wrought gold and silver backs. Some of these were gifts from Alexander the Second of Russia. The treasure includes a mantle worn by Stephen the Great, and some ikons, one of which, over 1,000 years old, was brought from Jerusalem by Alexander the Good.

AN ARCHITECTURAL COUSIN OF THE TAJ MAHAL

Neamțu Monastery is a going concern. Its long-haired, frocked monks till the fields, tend the vineyards, and themselves supply most of their wants.

In front of the church at Neamțu stands a baptismal font, crowned by a huge bulbous dome, reminiscent of the green domes of Russian churches. Curiously shaped, it is a heritage of the East.

When Tamerlane laid siege to Damascus he admired the graceful domes of the city's largest mosque, and gave orders that it be spared. Despite his command, the mosque was burned in the general fire which followed the storming of the city by his army. The Tatar conqueror then gathered together the architects and workers who had built it and took them with him to Samarkand, where they constructed a magnificent mosque, adorned with the bulbous domes which had caught his fancy at Damascus. It was from Samarkand that this unusual form of dome was adopted for the churches of Russia and farther west. Taken to India by Tamerlane's descendants, it may be recognized there in the Taj Mahal.

We spent a night in the nunnery of Agapia and next day saw the modern frescoes of the famous Romanian artist, Grigorescu, before going on to Putna.

THE STORY OF STEPHEN'S ARROW

The monastery was built by Stephen the Great, a quarter of a century before America was discovered, as a thank offering for delivery from Turkish invasion.

It is said that Stephen climbed a neighboring hill and from it shot an arrow. Where the arrow lighted he determined to build a monastery to serve as the burial place for himself and his line. The arrow was discovered in the heart of a tree, which was cut down and the base was encased in a plaster mold and formed a standard for the cross.

A long drive lined with venerable trees leads to the strong walls of the fortification. As we entered the thick doorway we saw above our heads the carved coat of arms of the Moldavian princes—the bull's head and star. Although it has been greatly restored, the church retains its original slender steeple. This museum contains some of the most important treasures of all orthodox Christianity, thanks to the farsightedness of the monks in hiding them in times of war. During the last war a hole was hurriedly torn in the walls, into which the treasure was thrust. Hay, carelessly piled on top, acted as a natural camouflage which allayed suspicion.

The Bible of Putna is very rare. It is of the thirteenth century and its beautiful Slavonic characters were painstakingly lettered by hand.

"SATAN" COMES WHEN HIS MASTER CALLS

Here our visit was made more attractive by the young monk who conducted us. In many places we had found no one who could speak French, English, or German—only Romanian. This young man spoke good German, and it developed that he was an Austrian subject while Bucovina belonged to Austria. He had become a monk only six years previously following the death of his brother. He was extremely handsome, but his beauty was somewhat hidden by his red beard.

In the sleeve of his cassock he carried a black kitten called "Satan." Satan would come or go at a word from his master. When we visited the church during vespers, he escaped and ran about in a most impious manner. The brethren were horrified and a chase for Satan at once began. His master, very much amused, finally called Satan, who at once obeyed.

We decided our friend must be the "Peck's bad boy" of the monastery. We found that he was the tailor for the monks, but he had many other talents. We spent an hour in his cell admiring the oils and water colors of which he was the artist. He showed us the manuscript of a comedy which he was writing to be performed by his brothers. He played most artistically a Schubert serenade on an antiquated zither and sang, to the accompaniment of his guitar, a rollicking English ballad. We learned that his greatest earthly desire was to own a piano and we wished that we were in a position to offer him one.

To see Sucevița, we left the main highway and wound slowly up a rocky track which follows the tortuous course of a swift

mountain torrent. The tilled fields and the snug villages of the wider valley were left behind and the way led upwards through the pine and beech forests over which seemed to hang the mist of the Middle Ages.

We passed peasant woodchoppers with old-fashioned, crescent-shaped axes on their shoulders or driving oxcarts laden with forest wood. They were dressed in much the same medieval costume as was worn by their ancestors when they followed their liege lords to the wars. Long ringlets of hair which had never felt the shears hung from under peaked black felt caps like those worn by Robin Hood's merry men. Short fleece-lined jerkins, studded leather belts, tight felt breeches caught at the bottom by the thongs of leather buskins completed the feudal resemblance.

A REFUGE FROM ASIATIC INVADERS

In the mind's eye we were carried back through the centuries to the martial flight of the Movila brothers, with their women in horse litters, their knights and men-at-arms, hurrying to make a last stand in their mountain stronghold against the savage invaders from the East.

What a welcome sight those white walls of Sucevița, crowned with high towers, must have been for these Christian princes fleeing before the Asiatic hordes (see illustration, page 437). Once the huge portcullis had dropped behind them, the Prince's family and followers no doubt hastened to the church, which stands in the center of the fortress, to pray for deliverance.

For beauty and interest this church of Sucevița has no peer in Romania. Rebuilt in the sixteenth century by Jeremiah Movila, it remains unaltered and unravished by time. The broad overhanging eaves of the round shingled roof have protected from rain and snow the beautiful frescoes with which the walls are adorned.

Against a jade-green background are seven tiers of frescoes—hermits, martyrs, prophets, apostles, angels, and archangels—a strange and lovely symphony of primitive blues, reds, greens, and bright gold crowns and halos. On one side wall we were startled to find a procession of Greek philosophers side by side with the saints. Portraits of Sophocles, Socrates, and Plato with dull gold crowns differed little from the saints.

In the chapel of the Movilas the walls are decorated with portraits of the founders and their families. Stone slabs with Slavonic inscription and Persian tracery cover the tombs of all except Elizabeth, wife of Jeremiah, she who could not be buried here. To Elizabeth, a beautiful and ambitious woman, is attributed the death of her brother-in-law, Simeon, that one of her sons might reign. Eventually she was carried off to Constantinople by Turkish allies and dishonored by being thrown into the harem of one of the Agas, where she ended her days.

In this room hangs a bronze chandelier ornamented with ostrich eggs, a gift of her husband, Jeremiah. A small round box of gilded silver which hangs in its center contains a lock of Elizabeth's Titian red hair. This she cut off and sent from Constantinople by one of her faithful servitors as a good-luck token to the monastery.

In the museum were tomb coverings and rich tissues, many of which were wrought by the hands of Elizabeth and her sister-in-law, Margaret. Some of the rare Slavonic manuscripts have suffered slightly from the damp ground in which they were buried during the last war. It was with a feeling of melancholy and regret that we left the tranquil hospitality of Sucevița, and retraced our steps along the swift stream to a newer and busier world.

And so lie hidden in the deep valleys of the pine- and beech-clad Carpathians these rare treasures of incomparable beauty, wrapped in an atmosphere of medieval legend and romance, only waiting to delight him who has the curiosity to seek them out.
